

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/PRCM:CWFREEMAN, JR.:CED

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TO USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 109788

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, TBIO, EAGR, CH, US

SUBJECT: EXCERPTS FROM EA/PRCM WEEKLY STATUS REPORT

TCK DELEGATION MEETINGS END ON HOPEFUL NOTE

1. THE DELEGATION OF PRIVATE GRAIN TRADERS AND USDA SCIENTISTS WHICH HAS BEEN IN PEKING AND SHANGHAI TALKING WITH PRC OFFICIALS ABOUT THE TCK WHEAT SMUT PROBLEM WOUND UP ITS MEETINGS WITH THE CHINESE ON A HOPEFUL NOTE.

2. IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM IS INDEED OF A TECHNICAL, NOT A POLITICAL, NATURE. THE CHINESE APPARENTLY INFORMED THE GRAIN COMPANIES INVOLVED OF THEIR CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE CONTAGION OF THEIR WINTER WHEAT CROP BY TCK SMUT AS EARLY AS JANUARY 1973. THE COMPANIES DID NOT EVEN TELL US ABOUT THIS UNTIL AUGUST LAST YEAR AND SOME OF THEM APPARENTLY MADE LITTLE OR NO EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE CHINESE FEARS THAT INTRODUCTION OF TCK COULD LEAD TO REDUCED WHEAT YIELDS IN CHINA UNTIL AFTER THE PRC HAD TAKEN THE TOUGH AND UNCOMPROMISING ATTITUDE OF THE PAST FEW
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MONTHS.

3. THE COMPANIES, IN COOPERATION WITH USDA, HAVE NOW MADE AN OFFER WHICH COULD RESOLVE THE QUESTION. THE PROPOSAL INVOLVES MAJOR ADJUSTMENTS IN PROCUREMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND TESTING PROCEDURES ON THE U.S. SIDE. THE CHINESE HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED, BUT EARLY THIS WEEK THE GOVERNORS' DELEGATION WAS TOLD BY A VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE THAT HE BELIEVED A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND.

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